

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 02953 01 OF 02 201833Z

42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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P R 201821Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6635

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 02953

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PL, GW

SUBJECT: POLISH/GERMAN AGREEMENT

FOR HARTMAN FROM SONNENFELDT

REF: STATE 040479

1. IN MY PREPARED REMARKS TODAY TO THE GERMAN-AMERICAN CONFERENCE AT KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION HEADQUARTERS, THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH WAS INCLUDED: BEGIN TEXT" THE FUTURE OF GERMANY REMAINS AS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE EAST-WEST EQUATION IN THE PRESENT ERA AS IT WAS AT THE HEIGHT OF THE COLD WAR. TOGETHER WITH OUR NATO ALLIES WE HAVE WORKED TO OVERCOME THE DIVISIONS OF GERMANY AND EUROPE, A GOAL ALSO DEEPLY DESIRED BY THE PEOPLES OF EASTERN EUROPE. IT IS A PROFOUNDLY HUMANITARIAN GOAL AS WELL AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE OVER-ALL ENDEAVOR TO BUILD RESTRAINT INTO EAST-WEST RELATIONS. IN THIS CONTEXT, WE HAVE LONG SUPPORTED THE EFFORTS OF SUCCESSIVE GERMAN GOVERNMENTS TO ACHIEVE NORMALIZATION AND RECONCILIATION THROUGH A SERIES OF AGREEMENTS WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS TO THE EAST. CARRYING THE HEAVY BURDENS OF HISTORY THEY DO, THIS HAS OFTEN BEEN A PAINFUL PROCESS FOR ALL CONCERNED. YET IT IS ONE OF THE IMPERATIVE

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BONN 02953 01 OF 02 201833Z

TIVES OF OUR ERA AND WE WELCOME THE PROGRESS THAT HAS

BEEN MADE BY OUR GERMAN ALLIES SINCE THE FIRST STEPS IN 1955 IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH POLAND, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THE SOVIET UNION." END TEXT

2. DURING MY SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH CDU PARTY CHAIRMAN HELMUT KOHL, WHICH DEALT MAINLY WITH THE POLISH/GERMAN AGREEMENT, HE SAID THAT THE BASIC PROBLEM FOR HIM WAS NOT ONE OF MONEY OR STATISTICS, BUT THAT THE AGREEMENT DID NOT LEAVE OPEN THE POSSIBILITY FOR EVERY GERMAN ETHNIC NOW LIVING IN POLAND TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY WHO DESIRED TO DO SO. MOREOVER, ACTUAL POLISH RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES AT THE PRESENT TIME HAD RESULTED IN THE RECEIPT BY HIM AND BY EVERY OTHER CDU MEMBER OF THE BUNDESTAG OF NUMEROUS LETTERS FROM GERMANS IN POLAND WHO CLAIMED THAT THEIR APPLICATIONS FOR PERMISSION TO DEPART HAD IMMEDIATELY RESULTED IN DISCRIMINATORY ACTION AGAINST THEM.

3. AFTER NOTING THAT WE DID NOT WISH TO INTERVENE IN THE GERMAN DEBATE OVER THE AGREEMENT WITH POLAND, I REPEATED SOMEWHAT MORE SPECIFICALLY THE POINTS I HAD MADE IN MY PUBLIC REMARKS, STRESSING THAT WE HAD LONG SUPPORTED THE GERMAN GOAL OF NORMALIZATION AND RECONCILIATION WITH POLAND AND WOULD REGRET IT IF THIS PROCESS WERE NOW ABORTED. I WENT ON TO SAY THAT GERMAN FAILURE TO RATIFY COULD SERIOUSLY AFFECT GIerek's PERSONAL POSITION. IT HAD NOT BEEN EASY FOR THE POLISH LEADER TO AGREE EVEN TO THE FIGURE OF 125,000, AND IF THE OPPORTUNITY WERE NOW LOST IT MIGHT NEVER COME AGAIN. MOREOVER, WHAT MEASURE OF INDEPENDENCE THE POLES MIGHT HAVE ACHIEVED VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIET UNION IN THEIR FOREIGN POLICY WOULD NOW BE JEOPARDIZED. IT SEEMED TO ME THAT THE SITUATION WAS SOMEWHAT ANALOGOUS TO THAT WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAD FACED WITH RESPECT TO SOVIET JEWRY. BECAUSE OF ADVERSE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION, THE NUMBER OF PERMITTED DEPARTURES FROM THE SOVIET UNION HAD GONE DOWN TO THEIR PRESENT MINIMUM LEVEL FROM WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE AGREED HIGHER LEVEL. THUS THE END RESULT WAS ADVERSE FOR THE VERY PEOPLE WHOM IT WAS DESIRED TO HELP. THE SAME MIGHT WELL BE THE CASE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 02953 01 OF 02 20183Z

WITH THE GERMAN ETHNICS IN POLAND IF GERMAN RATIFICATION WERE REFUSED.

4. KOHL DID NOT RESPOND TO MY POINTS DIRECTLY, BUT INSTEAD STRESSED HOW DIFFICULT THE LINE TAKEN BY THE FRG GOVERNMENT IN DEFENDING THE AGREEMENT HAD MADE IT FOR HIM PERSONALLY. HE NOTED THAT DURING THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE YESTERDAY CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAD CONTINUED HIS

ATTACK ON HIS (KOHL'S) CREDIBILITY AS AN OBVIOUS

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 BONN 02953 02 OF 02 201832Z

46

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 02953

EXDIS

TACTIC IN THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. HIS RELATIONS WITH SCHMIDT WERE NOW IRREPARABLY RUINED. THE CHANCELLOR HAD CITED ALLEGED COMMITMENTS MADE BY HIM DURING A PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 18, 1975, A MEETING AT WHICH FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER HAD ALSO BEEN UNEXPECTEDLY PRESENT. THE PUBLIC BETRAYAL OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF SUCH A MEETING MADE POLITICAL DISCOURSE BETWEEN PARTY LEADERS IMPOSSIBLE. ACCORDING TO KOHL, HE HAD SAID THAT HE WAS SYMPATHETIC TO THE OBJECTIVE OF RAPPROCHEMENT WITH POLAND AND HAD PROMISED THE CHANCELLOR TO EXAMINE THE AGREEMENT CAREFULLY. HE HAD NOT MADE ANY COMMITMENT, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD NECESSARILY BE APPROVED BY THE CDU. SOMEWHAT IRRELEVANTLY, HE ADDED THAT ANOTHER IMPORTANT FACTOR WAS THAT IN 1972 THE THEN CHANCELLOR BRANDT HAD BRUSHED ASIDE CDU DESIRES TO LEAVE OPEN, AT LEAST IN A LEGAL SENSE, THE FINAL BOUNDARY SETTLEMENT WITH POLAND, CLAIMING THAT THIS WAS NOW A SETTLED ITEM.

5. KOHL WAS CALLED TO THE TELEPHONE AT THIS POINT TO BE TOLD THAT THE CHANCELLOR HAD JUST GIVEN A PRESS CONFERENCE IN EFFECT CONTINUING YESTERDAY'S DEBATE. THE CDU LEADER SAID HE WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO RESPOND

IN HIS OWN PRESS CONFERENCE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

COMMENT: THE ATMOSPHERE IN BONN ON THIS ISSUE IS
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 02953 02 OF 02 201832Z

OBVIOUSLY HIGHLY CHARGED AT PRESENT. I MADE MY POINTS AND I BELIEVE THEY MADE SOME IMPRESSION ON KOHL, BUT HE OBVIOUSLY FEELS HIMSELF FORCED TO TAKE A POSITION WITH WHICH HE IS NOT ENTIRELY COMFORTABLE BY POLITICAL EXIGENCIES BEYOND HIS CONTROL. I SUGGEST THAT AMBASSADOR DAVIES, WITHIN HIS DISCRETION, BE AUTHORIZED TO GIVE THE LANGUAGE OF MY PUBLIC REMARKS TO THE POLISH GOVERNMENT, AS WELL AS THE FACT THAT I TOOK THE OCCASION OF MY CONVERSATION TODAY WITH KOHL TO PUT FORWARD THE ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF GERMAN RATIFICATION OF THE POLISH/GERMAN AGREEMENT. IF THE LAST POINT IS MADE, IT SHOULD BE STRESSED THAT ANY PUBLICITY MUST BE AVOIDED ON THE POLISH SIDE SINCE IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE NOT GET DRAWN INTO THE INTERNAL GERMAN DEBATE.

HILLENBRAND

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